

FARMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Policy Number:
246-03

Effective Date:
11/11/2016

Subject:
Hostage/Barricaded Subject Incidents

Approved by:

Steven D. Hebbe, Chief of Police



PURPOSE:

To provide general guidelines for handling hostage/barricaded subject situations.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Farmington Police Department to consider the safety and lives of the hostages, civilians, and officers involved in hostage/barricaded subject incidents to be of the utmost importance.

PROCEDURE:

Hostage Situation:

Criminals who use hostages to affect their escape are desperate individuals who, if allowed to escape, will pose a continuing threat to their hostage and to the public at large. The success of any hostage plan hinges on a team approach, good communications, and coordination of tactical maneuvers under one supervisor.

Objectives:

In hostage situations the following objectives, listed in order of importance, should govern all actions officers/supervisors on the scene decide to take:

1. Preserve the life of hostages, innocent civilians and officers;
2. Apprehend the subject;
3. Preserve the life of the suspect;
4. Recover property.

Barricaded Subject:

A barricaded subject poses an extreme danger, not only to police officers, but to other persons as well. Good judgment demands that a tactical plan be developed utilizing the passage of time to our advantage. Although each barricaded subject situation is different, the same basic tactics to neutralize the incident can be utilized. These basic tactics involve negotiating, escalating force levels and assaulting the location.

Control and Containment:

Responding officers should attempt to avoid a confrontation in favor of controlling and containing the situation until the arrival of trained Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team hostage negotiators and tactical personnel. Officers should use every verbal and tactical tool at their disposal to secure the arrest of the suspect without harming the hostage.

In extenuating circumstance, where the hostage situation becomes mobile, the officer in charge shall attempt to protect the safety of the hostage and bystanders by making all reasonable efforts to provide for chase/surveillance vehicles and control of travel routes. Assignment of chase/surveillance vehicles and control of travel routes is accomplished as dictated by the situation. Issues to be considered are as follows:

1. Use of marked or unmarked cars;
2. Utilization of SWAT or on duty Patrol personnel;
3. High or low visibility surveillance;
4. Use of aircraft from the San Juan County Sheriff's Department or other sources;
5. Assignment of marked units or traffic units to control intersections.

Special Weapons and Tactics Team Notification:

The SWAT Team should be contacted as soon as practical during hostage/barricaded subject situations. Once the need for the SWAT Team has been determined and has been requested, the shift supervisor or SWAT Commander notifies the Communications Center by radio or telephone. The SWAT Commander activates the team via cell phone in accordance with Special Weapons and Tactics team Deployment policy and procedure, #246-01.

The shift supervisor ensures that the Chief of Police, Captains, SWAT Commander, and Shift Lieutenant are notified via cell phone, and that the Communications Center notifies the Farmington Fire Department and San Juan Regional Medical Center paramedics. Canine Teams carry Department cell phones and are called out by the on duty supervisor or at the direction of the SWAT commander or his designee as needed. Bomb Squad personnel are activated by the SWAT Commander as needed.

Initial Responsibilities of First Patrol Officer at Scene:

1. Notify dispatch of the situation and request assistance, to include a supervisor;
2. Set up both inner and outer perimeters;

- a. The inner perimeter is established first in order to contain the suspect's movements and isolate the immediate area involved;
 - b. The outer perimeter's location must take into account the suspect's threat level and ability to cause harm. The outer perimeter must encompass the area which has potential of becoming involved as manpower allows;
3. Establish a means to evacuate bystanders and injured persons. The on duty supervisor has the responsibility for the decision to evacuate;
 - a. Bystanders are evacuated as needed for safety reasons. Anyone with intelligence information is taken to the staging area and the command post notified of their location;
 - b. Officers should make attempts to evacuate injured persons from the area if possible.
4. Notify the Communications Center to contact the Farmington Fire Department and San Juan Regional Medical Center paramedics and request that they stand by at the staging area until the incident is resolved to provide emergency first aid, if needed;
5. Request or procure equipment and resources in addition to standard issued equipment, as deemed necessary. Such equipment includes, but is not limited to, surveillance equipment. Additional equipment and procurement procedures are detailed in the Equipment and Resources Plan of the Emergency Operations Manual;
6. Establish communications with other agencies as necessary. San Juan County law enforcement agencies are initially contacted through the Communications Center. Communications are maintained through a shared law enforcement radio channel, designated by the Communications Center as the situation dictates. Other support agencies are initially contacted through the Communications Center. Communications may be maintained through a designated radio channel, whenever possible, or by direct contact at the scene or the use of cellular phone;
7. Gather intelligence information on the barricaded subjects, the hostage(s), and their location. Information about the subject should include, but not be limited to, the following;
 - a. Subject's identity;
 - b. Physical/clothing description;
 - c. What types of weapons and ammunition the subject possesses;
 - d. Military background and knowledge;
 - e. Prior arrests or convictions;
 - f. Medical/psychiatric history;
 - g. Previous terrorist/hostage activity;
 - h. Social/cultural background and gang affiliations;

- i. Family/friends;
- j. Use or access to alcohol, drugs or medication.

Information to be collected about the hostage(s) should include, but not be limited, to the following:

- 1. Identity;
- 2. Gender;
- 3. Physical and mental condition;
- 4. Physical/clothing description;
- 5. Relationship to the subject (friend, relative, stranger).

Information about the location of the barricaded subject/hostage taker should include the following:

- 1. Floor plan of building or house, if possible;
- 2. Location of all possible escape routes;
- 3. Location of all telephones;
- 4. All telephone numbers;
- 5. Utility connections.

Command Post:

The shift supervisor is responsible for ensuring that a command post is established and a safe route to the command post designated. The command post shall be established in a secure location. The command post should be equipped with a telephone, whenever possible. The Mobile Command Vehicle may be activated as the situation dictates, in accordance with the Mobile Command Vehicle policy and procedure, #241-10.

Public Information and News Media:

Authorization for news media access and news media policy is governed by the Public Information policy and procedure, #354-01. The Public Information Officer (PIO) is responsible for coordinating news media releases from the command post to the news media in accordance with the Public Information policy. The PIO's duties include conducting the following activities:

- 1. Establishing a media briefing area. It is recommended that the media briefing area be located at the Staging Area, whenever possible;

2. Coordinating community relations and conducting media briefings. The purpose of these functions is to disseminate public information, including casualty information, and provide external rumor control pursuant to the Public Information policy.

Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT):

Upon arrival of the SWAT Team, field officers are debriefed regarding any intelligence information they may have obtained.

The SWAT Commander, or designee, is in charge of tactics and deployment of the SWAT members. The SWAT Commander and the Incident Commander will work together regarding deployment of field officers.

Patrol officers will discharge their firearms only in exigent circumstances and in accordance with the Use of Force policy and procedure, #101-04.

Discharging of weapons by the SWAT will be authorized in accordance with the Use of Force policy and procedure, #101-04, except in those circumstances when it becomes tactically necessary to neutralize a suspect.

Deployment of chemical munitions should be done by trained SWAT personnel and in conjunction with a plan of action except in exigent circumstances. In those instances, authorization will be given by the SWAT Commander, Chief of Police or designee whenever possible.

Negotiation Procedures:

The Negotiation Team is a component of the SWAT Team and is activated on all hostage and barricaded incidents. The team may also be activated on suicide attempts. Negotiators and other members of the SWAT Team should be notified at the same time. Negotiators will also be included in high risk warrant services where the SWAT Team is being used.

Two Negotiators should be utilized whenever possible. The primary negotiator is responsible for attempting to contact the hostage/barricaded subject and for conducting the negotiations. The secondary negotiator acts as an advisor to the primary negotiator, and is the liaison between the primary negotiator and the SWAT Commander, Chief of Police or designee.

Negotiations should be conducted at a location free from any outside noise or interference, but close enough to the command post to communicate quickly with the on scene commander.

Negotiators may request outside assistance from other Department personnel as well as private professionals, clergy, parents, etc. Assistance may also be required from other private or public resources, such as phone company and utility services.

Negotiation personnel will obtain as much intelligence information as possible regarding the situation and the persons involved prior to the negotiations commencing, if possible. Negotiation personnel may attempt to make contact by telephone, drop phone, portable telephone, bull horn, or in person.

Face to face negotiations should only be considered when the safety of the negotiator can be maintained. Efforts should be made to persuade the subject to come out and surrender. Negotiation personnel may use bargaining tactics in hostage situations.

While negotiations are being conducted, whenever possible, the SWAT will be in position and prepared should offensive tactics become necessary to contain the scene.

Non-Negotiable Items:

Unless authorized by the Chief of Police, the following items will not be open to negotiation:

1. Weapons;
2. Replacement hostages (police or civilian);
3. Narcotics.

After-action Reports:

After-action reports are prepared for all Hostage/Barricaded Subject situations. The supervisor in charge is responsible for ensuring that an Offense Report case number is assigned and an officer is assigned to prepare the original report. In addition, a Use of Force Report form or any additional reports as appropriate are prepared, pursuant to the Records Division policy and procedure, #382-01 and the Incident Review Board policy and procedure, #101-07.

Other personnel involved prepare a supplemental offense report or other reports as deemed necessary, depending on their involvement. The following information should be contained in an after-action report:

1. Assignment and area of responsibility;
2. The time they became involved in the incident;
3. Description of the initial situation as they observed it, including descriptions of the extent of damage, injuries or fatalities, if applicable;
4. Recommendations for any problems or deficiencies identified.

Copies of completed after-action reports and other associated reports are forward to the Chief of Police for review.

Policy Review:

This policy is reviewed annually and updated, as needed.